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Subject: Farm Bill 2007 Official Comments - 08/21/2005 06:30 PM CDT
Date Sent: 08/21/2005 06:30:55 CDT
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FirstName: Jim

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Question1:

Question2:

Question3:

Question4: Dear Mr. Johanns:

My name is Jim Kurle. I am a South-Central North Dakota farmer, as was my father before me, as was his father before him. I am sorry that I missed the farm bill forum at Minot on July 26, because I heard there were some negative comments about the CRP program. I can't imagine who would be against the program; it couldn't have been a CRP farmer. I would like to express my thoughts on this CRP program, since I am aware of the upcoming 2007 farm bill and I know your hands are full.

You know, some people say, CRP hurts the local Cenex station. Our local Cenex in Wilton, North Dakota is not only profiting but expanding. CRP surely hasn't affected them negatively. Some say CRP hurts rural towns. Rural towns have been drying up since the 1940s. Since then, farmers can commute with better automobiles on improved highways for cheaper and better quality products. Farmers are simply more mobile. CRP has nothing to do with it.

Some say CRP has hurt our local bank. Our local bank stands solid. With CRP as a stable income for farmers, we can repay our loans more easily. The CRP program has made a tremendous difference in my life, personally. I farm land that is not like the Red River Valley Land. My land is hilly and rocky with much of it highly erodible. A heavy rain would move my soil and cause large ruts in the field. CRP has stopped this erosion. A windstorm would move my soil to another location and CRP has stopped this.

In the late 1990s I developed health problems. At that time, I placed an ad in the paper for rental of my land. I received few inquiries, but nothing solid developed. After studying the CRP program, I voluntarily bid most of my farm into the CRP program. I saw myself going deeper and deeper into debt - seeing a possible foreclosure or forced sale of my land - to a new hope with CRP. Our CRP acres are flourishing. I have upheld my share of the contract. I have cut and sprayed any existing weeds on all of acres, preventing any spread of weeds to the property of others. The grass is a great place for wildlife. We have seen a huge growth in the number of deer and birds for the sportsmen. I have had hunters from all over the nation, such as Florida, Georgia, Arkansas, Washington, Minnesota and Wisconsin. These hunters have thanked us for providing a place to hunt. The CRP program has brought in \$300 million to North Dakota's economy from recreational activities. During drought, the CRP program has provided ranchers with needed hay, preventing a possible tragic sale of their herds. CRP is a safeguard for them, our CRP is a value to them; it gives us a chance to help someone else.

I know what some "people" say about the CRP program, but as a CRP farmer, I know what I see. I see my banker smiling, because I am repaying what was a heavy debt load in 1998 to a manageable debt load today. I see the Cenex manager smiling because we are debt free to him. I see my farmland produce tall, lush grasses. I see my soiling staying in one place. I see the wind and rains unable to cause soil and farmland erosion. I see wildlife back in its rightful place, where deer can walk into a field of grass so thick that they will visually disappear. I see a wildlife refuge, and I see a hunter's paradise. I see a positive relationship developing between CRP farmers and America's hunters. I see drought stricken ranch managers coming to my door, asking for help. I see what they see, acre after acre of tall grass that will save their livelihood. I see their smiles as they drive away with load after load of hay bales. I see CRP as being a great program - for me it sure has been. I see CRP as being a win, win deal, and don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

I would like to see my government keep CRP intact, so that in 2007 I will have the option to automatically reenroll my land in to the CRP program. I thank President Bush for his August 2004 speech in which he stated existing CRP farmers would be reenrolled. I have supported the President in the 2000 and 2004 elections, and I would support him again if he were able to run. I trust him and his leadership, and how he stands on his word.

If there are farmers out there who do not like CRP, they can leave the program. As for me, I am standing in favor of the CRP program.

Thank you for your time,

Jim Kurle,
CRP Producer
Regan, ND

Question5:

Question6: